

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

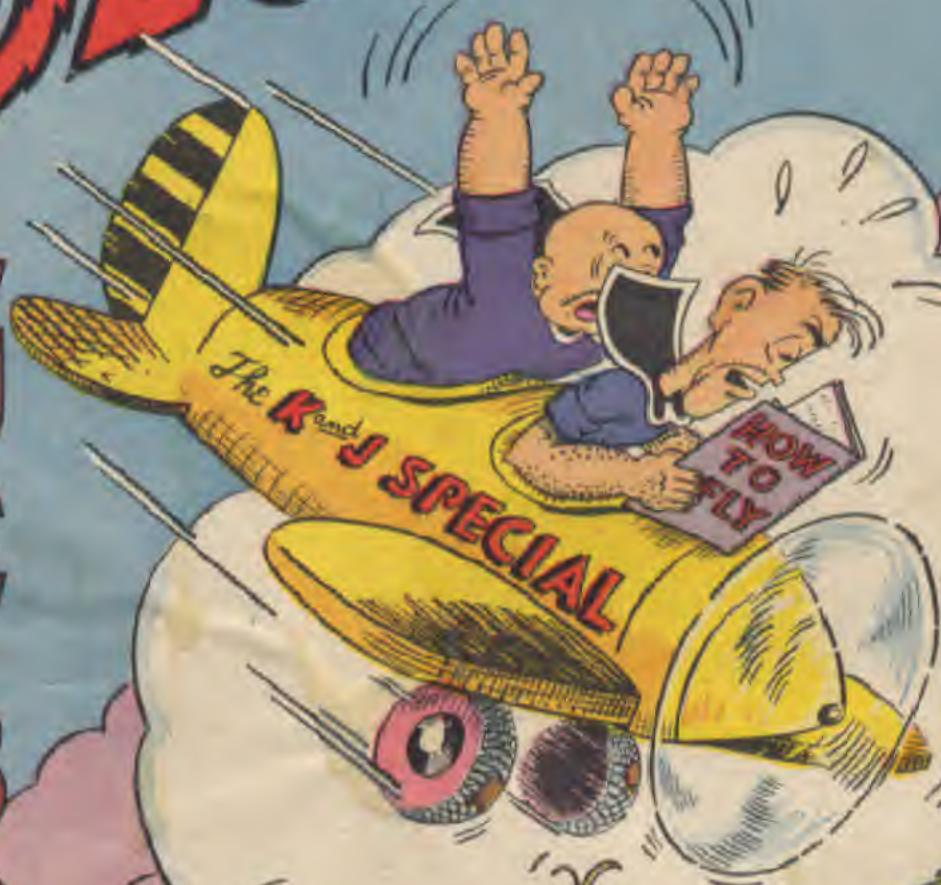
DICK COLE

BLUE BOLT

BLUE BOLT

Vol. 5 No. 1

10c



WEB COMIC UNIVERSE.COM



BLUE BOLT FLASHES

The Editors Write:

Dear Readers:

Many BLUE BOLT readers are working on farms this summer, where they are helping our country tremendously. Others have their own vegetable gardens, or give real assistance with the gardens of their parents.

Every lick of work on a farm or in a garden contributes to Victory, and helps to build a stronger America.

When a speedy shortstop snags a hard grounder and stops a flashy double play on the baseball diamond, the folks in the stands all cheer and yell. After the game, that same shortstop may go home and pull weeds, spray the bean plants, and pick tomatoes. No crowds stand beside the garden fence to cheer—but, honestly, he deserves cheers just as much for garden work as for brilliant ball handling.

Do you have a chance to assist on a farm this summer? If so, jump at the chance. It's terrifically important work.

Judging from the letters coming in, our readers need no reminders to keep up with their conservation work—saving waste paper, tin cans, and taking to the butcher the kitchen fats mother saves.

"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" is a rule that applies even in war time, though, so have fun this summer along with the very helpful work you do. We are all glad to see boys and girls enjoy their games and fun, especially when they go about both work and play in a wholehearted manner like that shortstop who plays "heads-up" baseball on the field and still does a real job in the garden.

Cordially yours,
THE EDITORS

The Readers Write:

Dear Editors:

I read BLUE BOLT COMICS quite often and enjoy them always. I like all the stories in BLUE BOLT COMICS including Krisko and Jasper (believe it or not), but they should have more brains, and still should be funny. They should stay on the high seas and small South Sea islands rather than on civilized land.

And don't put any girls in the book or you'll wreck it, and if the girls don't like it, it's tough.

Sincerely,
Paul Thompson
San Jose, Calif.

Looks as if we'll really have to let Krisko and Jasper become a little smarter. Do you think they'll still be as funny if they do? And, Paul, aren't you treating the likes of our girl readers a little bit rough?

Dear Editors:

I have been reading BLUE BOLT COMICS for more than three years and it is my favorite book.

In the May edition on the Editor's Page you said that you wanted the truth about the book. I really have nothing to criticize your book about except on Krisko and Jasper. As one of the readers, Angelo Pastorio, said: "All books need some humor." I agree with Angelo but Krisko and Jasper are too dull and should be more interesting.

My favorite features are Dick Cole and Fearless Fellers. I also enjoy Sergeant Spook very much because of his friend Jerry. I enjoy Edison Bell very much because the stories tell about young Americans and what they do. I have worked out many of Eddy Bell's inventions. Blue Bolts and Nuts and other short features are excellent. These laughs make your book much better. I wish you would publish **4-MOST** more often. It is a wonderful comic book.

Respectfully yours,
Marvin Shapiro
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

*Letters like yours are appreciated, Marvin, because you tell both what you like and **WHY** you like it. Krisko and Jasper really are a little silly some times. It may surprise you, but many readers like them just as they are.*

Dear Editors:

Hope I'm not infringing, because you see I am not a kid! Our family reads BLUE BOLT regularly, and needless to say find it a health and happy habit.

I need no coaxing to read it to my little fellow, whose first preference is Edison Bell; second, Fearless Fellers; third, Blue Bolt. With each issue the number of his "choices" increases.

Keep up the good work. Little and big folks really like BLUE BOLT COMICS.

Mrs. David Hedges
Danbury, Conn.

How pleasant it is to receive this letter from a mother who appreciates the work we have done to make BLUE BOLT an interesting comic for readers of all ages!

Dear Editors:

With this book I had never lifted so much. If der Fuehrer could read it he would half melt his heart out (if he ein heart had). Der best part of dis book is vare der jokes come in at. Not disloyal but der book iss good in every part, except for der Blue Bolt. He is what I call a "moiron." My brother iss in der army and when der chermans meet mit him dey will be sorry mit der life.

I read paper for der var effort and do a pretty good job off it. Until der japs and chermans are licked.

Yours in fun,
Victor Miller
Chicago, Illinois

We THINK we get what you mean, Victor!

Dear Editors:

I am going to tell you how I came to like BLUE BOLT.

I had been sick for a week and got so tired of staying in bed doing nothing, that I just had to read something. When daddy went to town he got me some funny books and, of course, one was BLUE BOLT. I read it and liked it very much.

My favorite characters are Dick Cole, Fearless Fellers, Edison Bell, Sergeant Spook, and I like Saily for the funny part.

I buy 25c War Stamps every time I can. There are five in my family and we buy a Bond every payday to help Uncle Sam.

Yours truly,
Helen Chamberlain
Pampa, Texas

We are sorry you were sick, Helen, but are glad you made the acquaintance of BLUE BOLT.

DICK GOLDE



WONDER

BOY-

EVERY YEAR FARR
M.A. AND HOLDEN
M.A. MEET FOR THREE DAY
MANOEUVRES. THE WINNER
OF THE CONTEST IS AWARD-
ED A TROPHY-A SILVER
SABRE. THE SCHOOL THAT
FIRST WINS *THREE* SILVER
SABRES *IN SUCCESSION* IS
AWARDED THE GRAND
TROPHY-A GOLD SABRE.
FARR WON LAST YEAR AND
IS OUT TO MAKE IT TWO IN
A ROW... IT IS STUDY HOUR
AT FARR. DICK COLE AND
SIMBA KARNO
ARE "BONING" FOR A MONTHLY
TEST.

IN JED JAXON'S ROOM. I'M
GLAD I CAME TO FARR, JED!
IT'S PERFECT BUT FOR ONE
THING!.... DICK COLE!!

SAY, DICK! NEXT WEEK,
MANOEUVRES! BOY!
IF YOU CAN JUST RE-
PEAT AND CAPTURE
THE KEY COMMAND
POST AGAIN!

YEAH.
THAT
WAS
LUCKY.
SIMBA.

LUCK? BRAIN
WORK! AND
WAS THAT
HOLDEN CAP-
TAIN BURNED
UP!

CAPTAIN-UH-
DALE JACKS,
AND - BUT WE
BETTER STUDY

HE MAKES ME SICK! MR. I'M-
IT-BLOW-HARD-SIR-GALA-
HAD-COLE! BUT I'M OUT
TO YANK HIM FROM HIS
HIGH HORSE!

BARKLEY HALL! DON'T TRY IT! YOU'LL BE SORRY... I KNOW-I TRIED IT!



Access to Site—THE STANDING SITE

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NEXT DAY AT
DISMISSAL OF
CLASSES.

SCIENCE

GENTLEMEN: I TRUST YOU ARE PREPARED
FOR YOUR TEST TOMORROW. FAILURE
MEANS NO PARTICIPATION AGAINST
HOLDEN IN MANOEUVRES NEXT WEEK.
FARR NEEDS EVERY MAN!... DISMISSED!

MATH.

LIT.

HISTORY

LATIN

THE TEST IS OVER,
BRINGING JOY TO
THE MAJORITY—
DISAPPOINTMENT
TO THE FEW.
SATURDAY—AND
ORDERS ARE POSTED
ON THE BULLETIN
BOARD. THE CADET
CORPS MOVES OUT
TO MEET HOLDEN
MONDAY MORNING.

SATURDAY NIGHT IN
CENTerview, BARKLEY
HALL IS OUT OF BOUNDS.

GUESS I'LL GO IN AND GET
A SANDWICH.

SANDWICH

BP

BOOM!

WATCH OUT
WHO YOU
BUMP, YOU
TIN SOLDIER!

TOUGH, HUH? HA!
FARR! THINK YOU
ARE DICK COLE-
SAP??

TAKE THAT
BACK OR
I'LL Sock
YOU!

A MIRACLE!

COLE! WELL,
I DON'T
EITHER!

AND
JUST
WHO
ARE
YOU?

CADET COLONEL, DALE JACKS,
HOLDEN M.A. LET'S GO INSIDE, MR-
UH-ER-?

CADET
BARKLEY
HALL.

HALL, WE BOTH HEARTILY DIS-LIKE COLE, DU YOU WANT TO HELP CUT HIM DOWN TO SIZE?

DO I? AND HOW!.... BUT WHY ARE YOU AFTER DICK COLE?

LAST YEAR, COLE MADE A FOOL OF ME. RESULT - TEN MILITARY DEMERITS, THE HORSE LAUGH FROM THE CADETS, AND \$50 I'D BET ON HOLDEN TO WIN. THIS YEAR I GET EVEN! NOW, HERE'S MY PLAN. YOU -

MONDAY MORNING AND THE FARR CADET CORPS DEPARTS EARLY, NOON, AND IT IS ROLLING INTO THE PASQUA HILLS.



WHO IS IN COMMAND OF HOLDEN THIS YEAR, SIMBA?

HAD AN OLD FRIEND OF YOURS, DICK. DALE JACKS, NOW CADET COLONEL!



WELL, BARK, I SUPPOSE COLE WILL DO SOME THING HEROIC AGAIN THIS YEAR.

I GOT A HUNCH, JED, HE... WON'T!

BOTH FORCES ARE ON TIME. HOLDEN TROOPS WEAR THE OLD STYLE HELMET. U.S. ARMY OFFICERS ARE TO ACT AS UMPIRES..... COLONEL HOLDEN, MAJOR FARR AND THE CHIEF UMPIRE CONFER ON THE THEIR RULES.



WELL, MAJOR FARR, THIS YEAR, HOLDEN WINS.

WE'LL SEE, COLONEL HOLDEN.

THE HOLDEN FORCES DEPART.



NIGHT... AND TAPS, SADLY BEAUTIFUL, FLOATS OUT OVER THE SLUMBERING FARR CAMP AND THE BROODING HILLS.



AT FARR G.H.Q. NEXT MORNING, CADET COLONEL JONES GIVES HIS ORDERS -

CAPTAIN EVANS.... YOUR COMPANY WILL OCCUPY HILL 9A. CAPTAIN BRUZZI.... ADVANCE BY ROAD 9D TO WOODS H9. SEND OUT A PATROL AND CONTACT ENEMY. CAPTAIN GREEN.... PROCEED TO M2 AND -

THE COMPANY, OF
CAPT. BRUZZI ARRIVES
AT B3.

LIEUTENANT
COLE, TAKE SERGEANT
SIMBA AND TWO SQUADS.
SCOUT NORTH, CONTACT
THE ENEMY, FIND OUT ALL
YOU CAN, FALL
BACK, AND
REPORT
HERE.

YES
SIR.

DICK THROWS OUT SCOUTS, AND THE PATROL
ADVANCES INTO ENEMY TERRITORY.



AN HOUR PASS-
ES AND DICK'S
FIELD GLASS-
ES PICK UP A
SCOUT WHO
IS SIGNALING
- ENEMY
SIGHTED -

SERGEANT SIMBA! TAKE HALL,
HECKER, ADAMS.. SEE WHAT
THE SCOUT
DISCOVERED -

YES, SIR!

HECKER, SCOUT AHEAD. OKAY, SARGE
DETAIL - FOLLOW ME!



HALF AN HOUR
LATER HECKER RE-
PORTS IN.

ADVANCE GUARD OF
ENEMY FORCE COMIN
UP THE ROAD!



INTO THOSE ROCKS
MEN AND KEEP DOWN!



THE ADVANCE GUARD PASSES AND THE MAIN
BODY IS STREAMING BY, WHEN-



A-AH--CHO-O-O!
HA-AH- CHOO!
A-AH-





JUST BEFORE DAWN THE NEXT DAY.

CORPORAL ZACK AND FOUR MEN STAY HERE FOR CONTACT. THE REST OF US WILL SLIP THROUGH THE ENEMY LINES. QUIET- AND, FOLLOW ME!

THE PATROL MAKES A MILE, THEN-

HALT! WHO GOES THERE!

HUH! A COW-

GOOD WORK, SLIP'RY!



MACK, TAKE THE PRISONER TO CORP'L ZACK. C'MON MEN, IT'S GETTING LIGHT.



ANOTHER MILE, AND DICK RECONNOITRES HA! TWO SUPPLY TRUCKS. I CAN USE 'EM.



MEN, TWO ENEMY TRUCKS ON THE ROAD. WE'LL SURPRISE 'EM. NO SHOOTING!... FOLLOW ME!



JUST AS THE PATROL STRINGS TOWARD ITS UNSUSPECTING PREY-



BARK HALL STUMBLES, FALLS-



A HIDDEN MACHINE GUN OPENS UP AND AN UMPIRE CALLS CASUALTIES.





IT IS LATE AFTERNOON
BEFORE THE COAST SEEMS
CLEAR. CRAMPED AND
HUNGRY THEY LEAVE
THEIR HIDING PLACE.





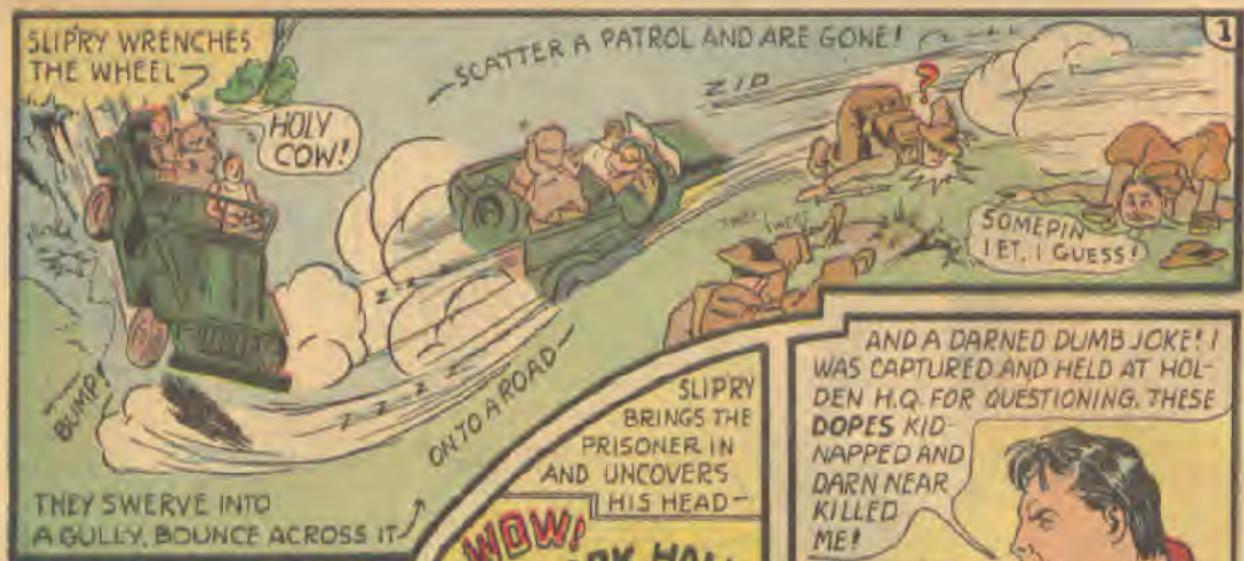
THAT'S JACKS, DICK!

USE THE BLANKET! GO!



THEY SPEED AWAY-





FEARLESS FELLERS

GOSH, WE'VE SURE PILED UP THE SCRAP!

YEAH -- BUT HOW'RE WE GOING TO GET OUT?

THE FEARLESS FELLERS GO ALL OUT IN THEIR WEEKLY SCRAP COLLECTION DRIVE AND MANAGE TO INCLUDE A LITTLE GOOD WILL FOR GOOD MEASURES!

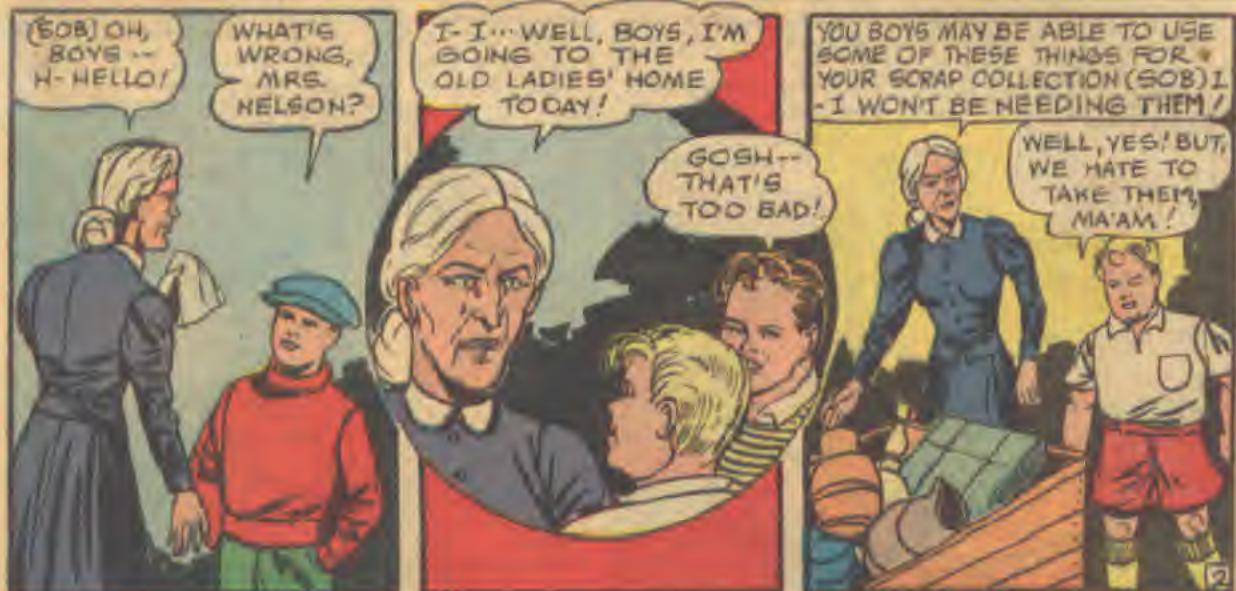
THIS REMINDS ME OF THE TIME AH PAINTED MANSSELF INTO A CORNER!

MR. CLAYTON, FUDGE'S DAD, IS HARD AT WORK IN HIS OFFICE WHEN --

PROPERTY ESTIMATES,
\$40,000... BUILDING ASSESSMENTS -- OH, COME IN!

I'VE GOT SOME STAMPS FOR YOUR COLLECTION, POP!

STAMPS? OH, ALL RIGHT, LET'S SEE THEM!





BUT, AS THE BOYS RETURN PAST MR. CLAYTON'S OFFICE, PUDGE DECIDES TO RISK HIS FATHER'S ANGER!

HEY, PUDGE-- WHERE YOU GOING?

J. C. CLAYTON
REAL ESTATE

I JUST GOT AN IDEA! WAIT A MINUTE!

PUDGE, DIDN'T I TELL YOU NOT TO INTERRUPT?

SORRY, DAD, BUT LOOK!

HMM--MORE STAMPS! SAY, WHERE DID YOU GET THESE?

ARE THEY ANY GOOD?



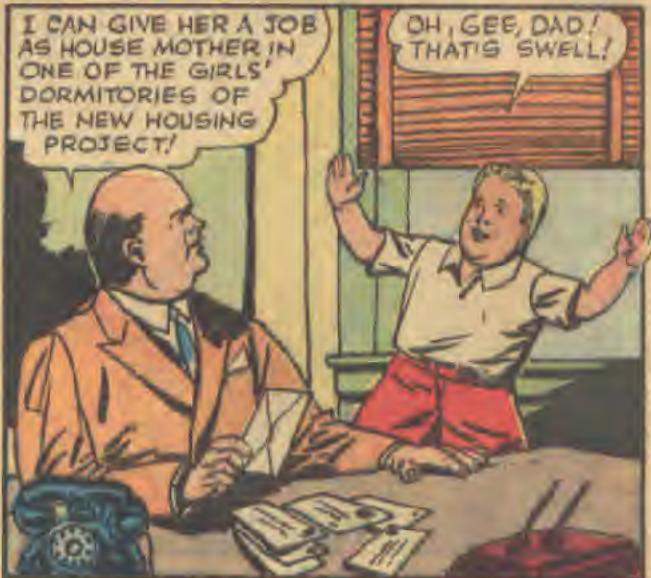
PUDGE TELLS HIS FATHER OF MRS. NELSON'S PLIGHT.

SO, I JUST THOUGHT THEY LOOKED LIKE FUNNY STAMPS AND DECIDED TO SHOW THEM TO YOU!

PUDGE, MAYBE WE CAN HELP MRS. NELSON! THE STAMPS ARE WORTH ABOUT \$200 BUT...

I CAN GIVE HER A JOB AS HOUSE MOTHER IN ONE OF THE GIRLS' DORMITORIES OF THE NEW HOUSING PROJECT!

OH, GEE, DAD! THAT'S SWELL!



THE FEARLESS FELLERS RACE TO DELIVER THE GOOD NEWS AND ARRIVE JUST IN TIME!

WAIT, MRS. NELSON, DON'T GET INTO THAT BUS!

WHA--WHAT'S HAPPENED, BOYS?



MRS. NELSON HEARS THE GOOD NEWS --

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ANY MORE, MRS. NELSON!

OH, BOYS -- I FEEL MORE LIKE CRYING NOW THAN BEFORE! HOW CAN I THANK YOU ENOUGH!

AW, GOSH--WE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!



FOR ONCE IN THEIR LIVES, THE FEARLESS FELLERS MANAGED TO DO GOOD WITHOUT CAUSING TROUBLE -- IT'S HARD TO TELL WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THEM NEXT SO, SEE THE NOVEMBER ISSUE OF BLUE BOLT!

BLUE BOLT

THE AMERICAN



AT HIS BASE, BLUE BOLT WATCHES A PLANE COMING IN FOR A LANDING.

LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING NEW HAS BEEN ADDED~



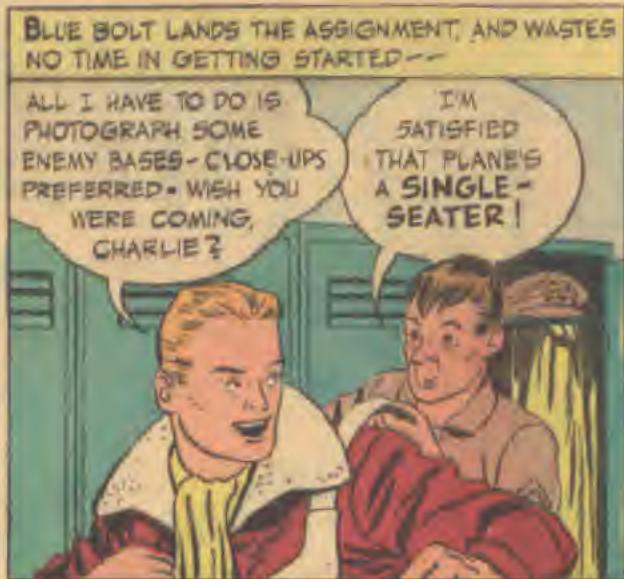
THAT'S A SMOOTH LOOKING JOB, FELLA!

YOU SAID IT-- SHE'S STRIPPED FOR SPEED--



THIS SHIP HAS NO GUNS-- IT'S A CAMERA PLANE, AND CAN OUT-RUN ANYTHING IN THE SKY.





BUZZING OFF UNHARMED, BLUE BOLT SEES
ANOTHER SUBJECT FOR HIS LENS--

A JAP FLOAT
PLANE-- WHAT A
NICE PICTURE!

MY/ HE DOESN'T
LIKE TO POSE!

--SO YOU WANT
TO PLAY ROUGH,
EH? ME, TOO!

FLASHING OVER THE JAP FLOAT
PLANE AT BLAZING SPEED--

SHOW
THEM YOUR
HEELS!

BUT A SQUADRON OF ZEROS HAS TAKEN
OFF IN THE MEANTIME--

OH-- THEY WANT
A FAMILY GROUP
PICTURE!

--BLUE BOLT'S WASH
UPSETS IT /

CIRCLING BACK, BLUE BOLT PHOTOGRAPHS
THE ISLAND FROM A GREAT ALTITUDE --

A DAY'S
WORK, I'D
SAY --

GOTTA
GET BACK
WITH MY
FILMS --

AS HE FLIES HOME, A STALKING JAP
POUNCES DOWN --

OH!
OH!

WHEELING JUST IN TIME,
BLUE BOLT ESCAPES --

NOT
THIS
TIME.
NIPPO --

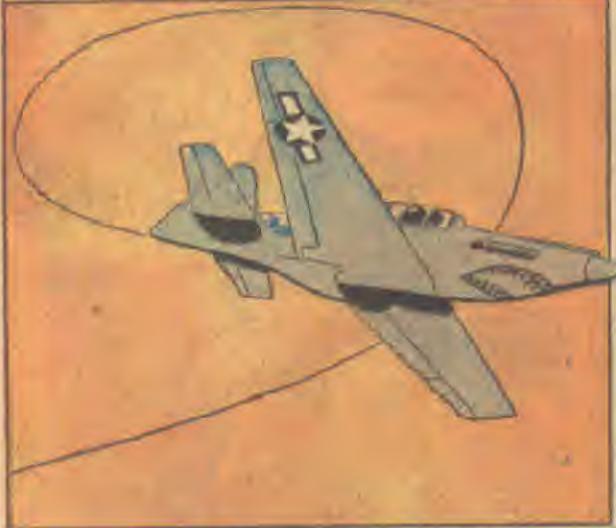
AFTER FURIOUS CIRCLING,
THE FASTER PLANE HOLDS
THE ADVANTAGE AND --

-- THE TOOTHLESS DOG CAN BITE !

JUST AS
GOOD AS
A GUN !



SAFE AGAIN, BLUE BOLT TURNS FOR HOME--



AT THE BASE, CHARLIE IS
ANXIOUS AS NIGHT FALLS--



IT'S BLUE BOLT, ON HIS LAST
PROP OF FUEL--



HE'S GOTTA
LAND WITH A
DEAD STICK--

WITHOUT
SMASHING
THE CAMERA!



BABY CAME
HOME-- IS ALL
FORGIVEN?

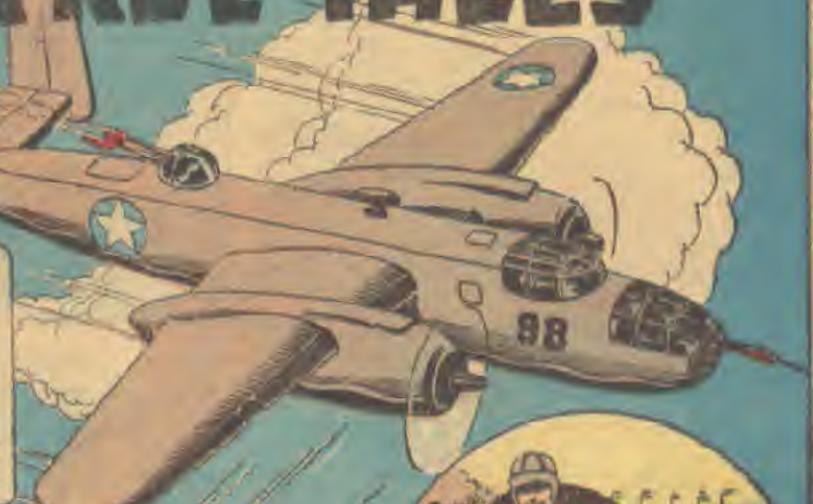




OLD CAP HAWKINS' TRUE TALES



A U.S. PLANE MARKED NO. 98 STREAKS THROUGH THE AIR, BLASTING THE ENEMY OUT OF THE SKY. IN IT, JOEY, IS LT. TOMMY HARMON, ONCE FAMOUS ALL-AMERICAN FOOTBALL STAR, NOW CONTINUING HIS THRILL-PACKED LIFE AS AN ACE OF THE AIR....



IN 1939....



YOUNG HARMON GRADUATED IN JUNE, '41

IT'S BEEN GREAT HAVING YOU HERE, TOMMY... NOW WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS?



TOMMY ENLISTED IN THE U.S. ARMY AIR FORCE AND WAS SENT TO CALIFORNIA FOR TRAINING. THERE HE WON HIS SILVER WINGS AND GOLD BAR OF 2ND LIEUTENANT.

IN A B-25 NO. 98, YOUNG HARMON AND HIS CREW WINGED THEIR WAY DOWN SOUTH. PERFECT FLYING—UNTIL OVER THE AMAZON A VIOLENT TROPICAL STORM BROKE.



THOUSANDS OF MILES AWAY...



ON THE 5TH DAY...



BUT SUDDENLY...



NOT FAR DOWN THE PATH...



THE NATIVES SAWED HARMON WAS TAKEN TO A SETTLEMENT, AND A FEW HOURS LATER...



HARMON WENT TO NO. AFRICA AS A FIGHTER PILOT. HIS MISSIONS DONE THERE, HE THEN VOLUNTEERED IN HARD-PRESSED CHINA. HIS FIRST ACTION WAS A HONG-KONG RAID.



HARMON KEPT KNOCKING ZEROS OUT... THEN, ONE DAY...





FOR 32 DAYS HARMON WANDERED IN WOODS AND HILLS. FINALLY, AFTER MANY MORE NARROW ESCAPES...



NOT EVERYONE DID!

"I'M BACK AT MY BASE FEELING FINE... READY FOR ANOTHER CRACK AT JAPS... TOMMY."

DIDN'T I SAY TOMMY WOULD COME THROUGH?



LATER TOMMY WAS GIVEN A BRIEF FURLOUGH AND ON A VISIT WITH HIS COACH.

YOU RILED UP SCORES AT MICHIGAN... AND YOU'RE STILL DOING IT AGAINST OUR ENEMY. KEEP IT UP, TOMMY.



EDISON

BELL



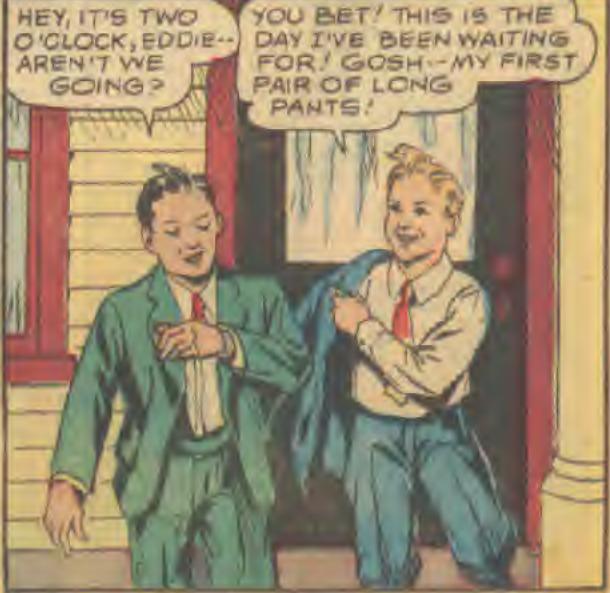
GOSH, EDDIE, YOUR CLOTHES CLOSET IS BEGINNING TO LOOK NIFTY! JUST LIKE AN AD OR SOMETHING!

WELL, THE MAIN IDEA IS TO MAKE CLOTHES AND SHOES LAST LONGER, JERRY!



HEY, IT'S TWO O'CLOCK, EDDIE--AREN'T WE GOING?

YOU BET! THIS IS THE DAY I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR! GOSH--MY FIRST PAIR OF LONG PANTS!









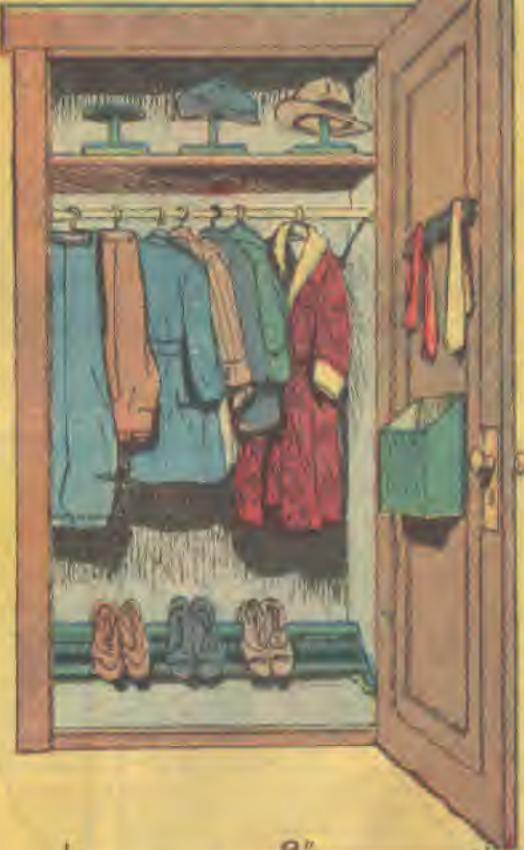
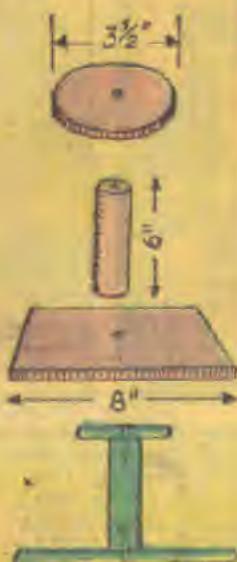




EDISON BELL'S CLOTHES CLOSET

TO COOPERATE FOR VICTORY ON THE HOME FRONT, KEEP YOUR CLOTHING IN APPROPRIATE ORDER! REMEMBER: "USE IT UP, WEAR IT OUT, MAKE IT DO—OR DO WITHOUT!"

HAT RACKS WILL KEEP YOUR HATS FREE FROM ACCUMULATING DUST ON SHELVES! USE SOFT PINE WOOD (ABOUT 4-PLY) AND BE SURE TO SAND THE CIRCULAR TOP SMOOTH AFTER CUTTING WITH BAND SAW.



THE SIZE OF YOUR SHOE RACKS WILL DEPEND ON THE SIZE OF YOUR CLOSET, BUT BY FOLLOWING DIAGRAMS AT LEFT, YOU CAN EASILY BUILD THIS ESSENTIAL CLOSET ITEM!



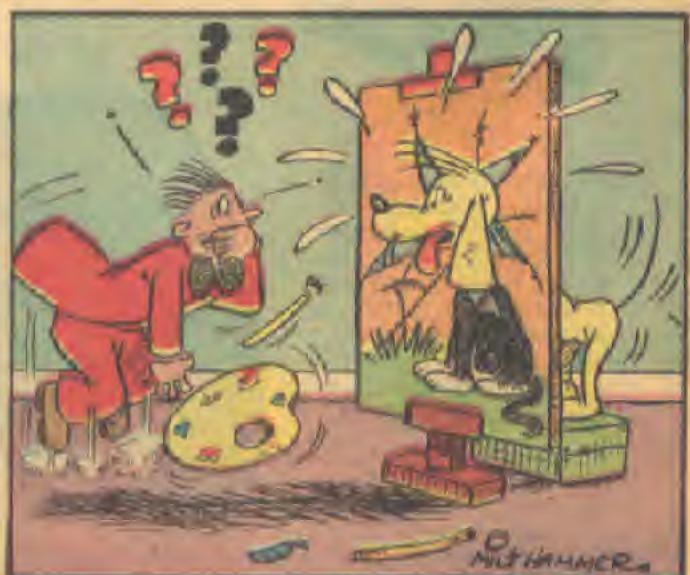
AN ACCESSORY BOX IS A HANDY GADGET TO TACK ONTO THE DOOR OF YOUR CLOSET. USE IT TO HOLD YOUR CUFF LINKS, TIE CLIP, COLLAR PIN, AND OTHER SMALL THINGS THAT MIGHT OTHERWISE BECOME EASILY MISPLACED.



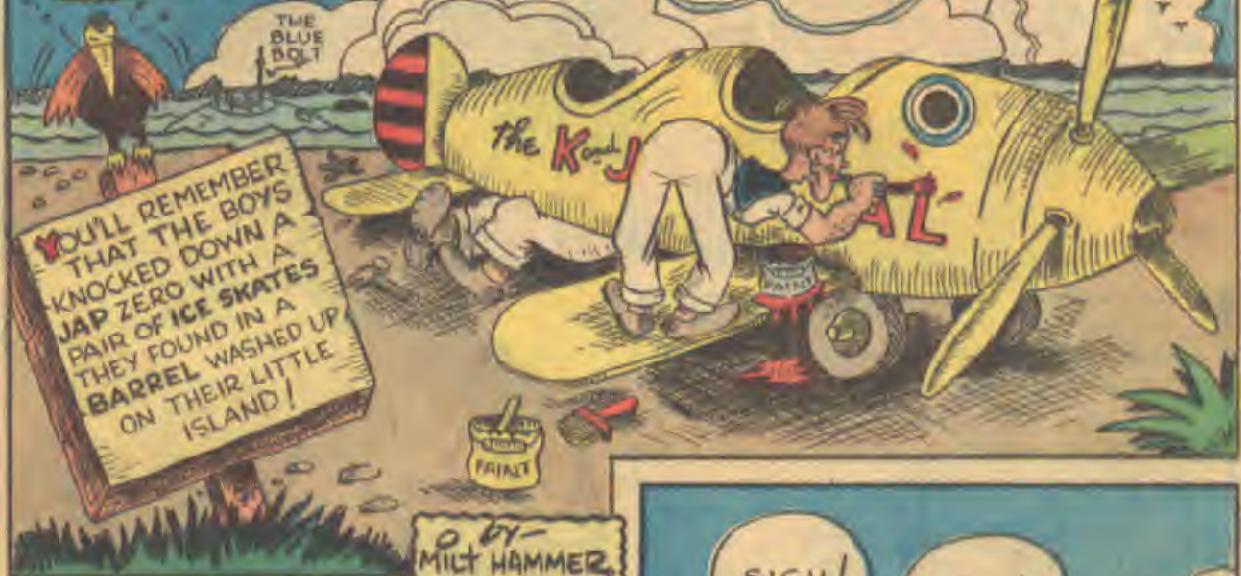
AN INTERESTING AND PRACTICAL TIE RACK CAN BE FASHIONED LIKE AN AIRPLANE "PROP". DRAW YOUR DESIGN CAREFULLY ON THE WOOD BEFORE CUTTING! USE VERY SOFT WOOD, SUCH AS PINE OR SPRUCE. ALMOST ANY OLD LUMBER CAN BE USED TO MAKE THE ARTICLES ON THIS PAGE!



P.S. - SHOE TREES PLACED IN SHOES IMMEDIATELY AFTER WEARING WILL PROLONG THEIR LIFE MANY MONTHS!



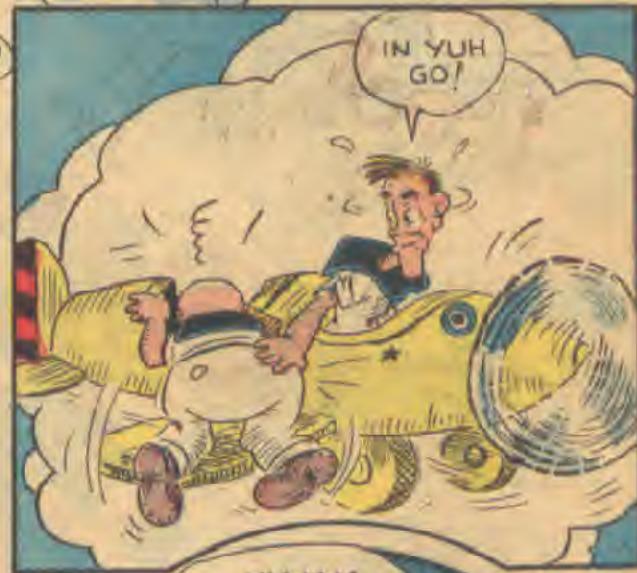
KRISKO and JASPER







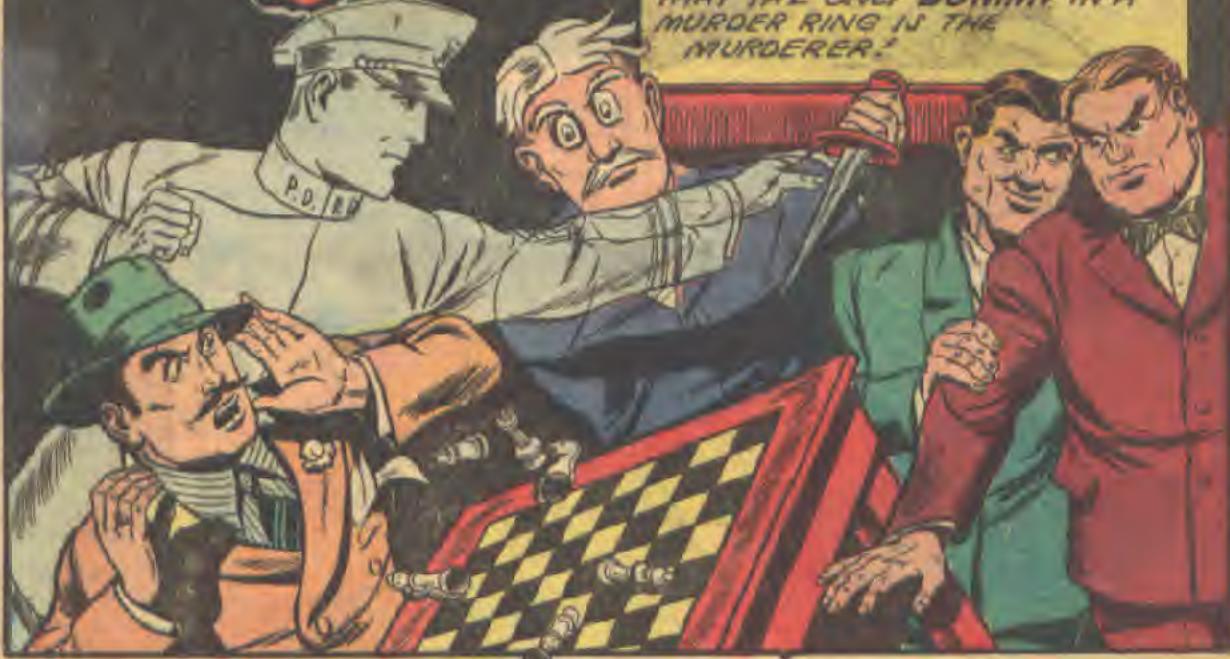
THE PLANE LEVELS OFF, AND KRISKO LEVELS OUT INTO SPACE...





Sergeant Spook

MIKE SPARTON HAD THE PERFECT SETUP FOR MURDER! AT LEAST, HE THOUGHT SO UNTIL SERGEANT SPOOK STEPPED IN TO PROVE THAT THE ONLY DUMMY IN A MURDER RING IS THE MURDERER!



JERRY WALKS ALONG THE "GAY WHITE WAY" - ONE EVENING ...

SHOOTING GALLERY
6 SHOT 10¢

A PENNY ARCADE -- GOLLY, THEY'VE GOT THOSE KEEN NEW TARGET PRACTICE MACHINES! I WANT TO TRY THAT!

MARVO

THE
sensational
MECHANICAL
CHESS PLAYER

Challenges All Comers!

STEP INSIDE

CHESS PLAYER... HUH! BET IT'S SOME KIND OF TRICK!

BOY, THIS IS GREAT! I'M TAIL GUNNER IN A FLYING FORTRESS, AND WE'RE FIGHTING OUR WAY BACK FROM A RAID ON GERMANY!

RAT-TA-TAT
RAT-TA-TAT-TAT
TAT-RAT-TAT

JERRY'S GAME OF MAKE-BELIEVE IS SUDDENLY INTERRUPTED!

HEY, YOU!
STOP THAT RACKET!

UH--
WHY? WHAT'S
THE MATTER,
MISTER?

GET OUT AND STAY
OUT--NO KIDS UNDER
SIXTEEN ARE ALLOWED
IN HERE!

WELL,
DON'T
SHOVE--
I'LL GO! I
DIDN'T KNOW...
HEY!

AS JERRY GLARES AFTER HIS
BOUNCER, SERGEANT
SPOOK APPEARS!

GOSH--I
WASN'T
DOIN' ANY
HARM!

MY, JERRY,
YOU DO LOOK
MAD! WHAT'S
WRONG?



SOME BIG EGG JUST TOSSED ME
OUT OF THERE--HE SAID I
WAS TOO YOUNG TO PLAY IN
THERE WITH THAT TARGET
PRACTICE GUN!

WAIT HERE, JERRY--I
WANT TO LECTURE
THAT GUY ON THE
TREATMENT OF
CHILDREN!

AW, DON'T
BOTHER, SPOOK!
IT ISN'T THAT
IMPORTANT TO
ME!



JERRY MAY NOT REALIZE IT, BUT
THAT STORY HAS A FISHY RING
TO ME! WHY SHOULDN'T HE
PLAY WITH ANY OF THESE
MACHINES? WHY THE
RUSH TO GET HIM
OUT?

WELL, I'LL BE...THAT
LOOKS LIKE MART
FLAVIN, THE
GAMBLER!

RIGHT ON
TIME, MIKE!
HAVE YOU GOT
YOUR MONEY?



THIS IS EASY MONEY, MART--TEN GRAND TO BEAT MY MECHANICAL CHESS PLAYER! YOU MUST THINK YOU KNOW HOW TO PLAY CHESS!

AW, CAN THE CHATTER AND LET'S GET STARTED! I CAN BEAT ANY MACHINE EVER INVENTED!



SPOOK FOLLOWS THE MEN INTO THE CURTAINED CHAMBER WHERE THE MECHANICAL DUMMY IS PLACED!

HERE'S MY CASH, DAN! I'M AFRAID YOU WON'T HOLD IT LONG!

HERE'S MY BET! NOW WHAT KIND OF A SETUP IS THIS?



AS THE GAME PROGRESSES, SPOOK WATCHES IN FASCINATION, FORGETTING ALL ABOUT JERRY, WHO IS WAITING OUTSIDE!

OKAY, MARVO, YOUR MOVE!

THIS IS UNCANNY! THAT ROBOT HAS BEEN PLAYING BRILLIANT CHESS AS THOUGH HE HAD A BRAIN!



JERRY GROWS MORE AND MORE IMPATIENT!

GOSH, WHAT'S KEEPING SPOOK? THERE ISN'T A SOUND FROM IN THERE AND HE'S BEEN GONE ALMOST FIFTEEN MINUTES!



SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED--I'LL DUCK DOWN INTO THE CELLAR AND COME UP THE BACK WAY!

GOSH--IT'S DARK DOWN HERE--I'D BETTER WATCH MY STEP! THERE'S A LITTLE LIGHT OVER IN THAT DIRECTION...



CAUTIOUSLY, JERRY MOVES ACROSS THE DARKENED CELLAR TO WHERE HE SEES THE STREAKS OF LIGHT! SUDDENLY --

OOH--I ALMOST BUMPED INTO THAT LADD... SAY! THERE'S A MAN UP THERE!



AND I CAN HEAR VOICES
FROM UP THERE NOW!
THAT ONE SOUNDS LIKE
THE MAN WHO THREW
ME OUT!



MEANWHILE, IN THE ROOM
ABOVE . . .

THERE, MR. MARVO!
YOU'RE CHECKMATED
AND BEATEN!

DON'T
WORRY . . .
WE CAN'T
LOSE!

HOW IN . . . ?



HAIWA! I TOLD
YOU, MIKE, THAT
NO MACHINE
COULD BEAT ME!
OKAY, DANNY,
LET'S HAVE THE
(STAKES!)



A SUDDEN, UNEXPECTED MOVE
BY THE MECHANICAL MAN
AND A KNIFE IS THRUST
DEEP INTO THE GAMBLER'S
CHEST!

MARVO, THE MASTER
MACHINE! NOT
SUCH A DUMMY,
EH, DANNY?

HOLY
SMOKES--
MARVO'S
STABBED
HIM!



OKAY, DANNY, HURRY!
WE'LL BURY HIM
DOWN IN THE
CELLAR!

BOSS, THIS
IS THE BEST PAYIN'
JOB I EVER HAD!

QUIITE
A PRETTY LITTLE
SCHEME - IF I LET
THEM GET AWAY
WITH
IT!



I WONDER WHAT WILL
HAPPEN AROUND HERE
IF THE DEAD WERE
SUDDENLY TO COME
TO LIFE?

MIKE! HIS
ARM-- IT'S
MOVIN'! BUT,
I KNOW
HE'S DEAD!



BUT, SPOOK DOES A THOROUGH
JOB OF SCARING THE MUROFERS...

YEE-- I'M
GETTIN'
OUT OF
MY, MY-- WHAT
HERE! FEAR A GUILTY
CONSCIENCE CAN
AROUSE!

ME, TOO!



SERGEANT SPOOK RACES PAST THE DESPERATE ESCAPING MEN.

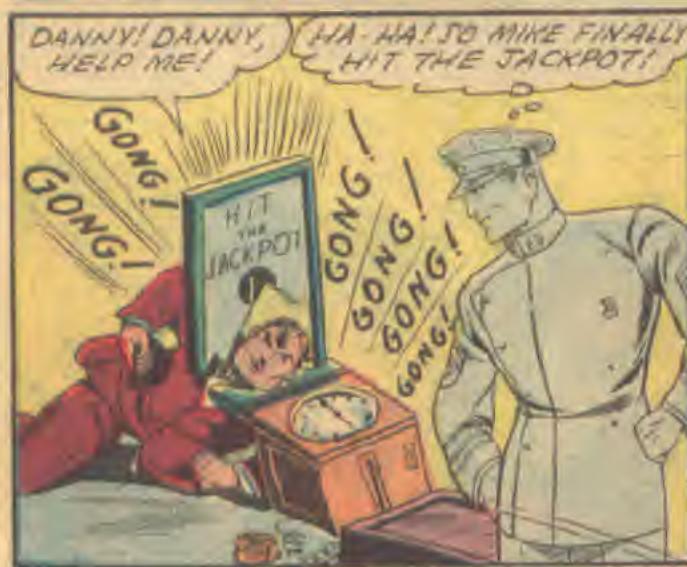
HUH - I CAN'T LET THEM GET AWAY THAT EASILY!

THIS PLACE IS HAUNTED - I'M GETTIN' OUT! PUFF-PUFF!

I DON'T GET IT - HOW COULD HE...

HERE, BOYS, DON'T FORGET YOUR SLOT MACHINES - HOW WOULD YOU MAKE A LIVING WITHOUT THEM?

YEOW! SOMEONE IS THROWING THOSE MACHINES AT US!



MEANWHILE IN THE CELLAR BELOW . . .



BUT I AIN'T LEAVIN' WITHOUT THE 'GRAND' MIKE OWES ME FOR THAT JOB! I SURE SWEATED OVER THE CHESS GAME EVEN IF I LOST!



HOST-BLOOD! ? HUH--SPOOK'S IN ON THIS SOME PLACE! I'LL JUST FOLLOW THAT GUY UPSTAIRS AND I'LL TAKE THIS ROPE ALONG IN CASE!



M-MIKE -- GIMME MY DOUGH! I'M GETTIN' OUT! C'MON, FORK OVER AN' MAKE IT FAST!



FLAVIN -- THAT'S THE GUY YOU WANT! HE'S THE ONE WHO KILLED YOU! GET HIM -- BUT PLEASE LEAVE ME MECHANICAL ALONE! OH, SO THAT'S THE FELLOW WHO HANDLED THE KNIFE!



WHY, YOU SNEAKIN'-- I SUPPOSE IT WAS MY IDEA TO KILL HIM IF THE GAME DIDN'T GO RIGHT!

YUP--HONOR AMONG THIEVES! OH, BOY--THIS IS SOME PARTY!



SUDDENLY--

JERRY!



WHAAH! FLAVIN--DON'T!



Killer of the Kilns

BUD MORLEY stopped abruptly. A feeling of the nearness of danger gripped him now as it had on previous nights. Instinctively his broad-shouldered, lithe body tensed in a posture of defense. He heard behind him the clamor of machines in the main sugar factory. It was like some mad orchestration.

He glanced about the brick-walled kiln-room. The steel-jacketed sides of the two churn-shaped kilns extended up into the darkness like the black-booted legs of a giant. Dust-dimmed light halos lurked in deep shadows.

Overhead a drive shaft droned softly.

Bud jumped as an oil-can crashed into the concrete floor beside him. He whirled, looked up quickly. A ladder was tipping backward from the wall. On top of the ladder Tom Cameron, Bud's oiling partner, clutched frantically at the retreating drive shaft. Then Tom toppled downward, one leg thrashing between the middle rungs. Bud, paralyzed a moment by the amazing thing he saw, leaped too late to steady the ladder. It smashed against his shoulder, knocked him sprawling.

Bud pulled Cameron to his feet. The oiler struggled for breath. He grinned wryly as he touched a skinned knee.

"Pretty lucky we're not hurt," he growled, and added, shaking his head: "I can't understand what threw that ladder off balance. I'd swear it was set firmly against the wall."

The same thing caused the ladder to fall that made that whirling oil-drain pan nearly cut off the hoistman's head. The same thing that caused Mike Zarski to slip from the catwalk into the pulp pit. The thing that puts grease on catwalks, leaves round bars on the kiln landings, and shoves men into whirling machinery. And — Bud looked sharply at his friend — "I don't mean what you're thinking — carelessness."

"What do you mean?" Tom asked.

"I mean," said Bud, "that I saw a stick being pushed against your ladder through that pipe-hole in the partition wall!"

"No" — Tom gulped — "you can't mean that!"

"I'm going to see the superintendent, McCharles," Bud said. "Karns, the kiln foreman, thinks I'm crazy."

Tom frowned. "It does sound a little far-fetched, Bud. But if you saw it — Say, we better watch our step if some crazy killer's loose in the kiln-room." Tom shuddered. "This sure is a spooky place, all right."

BUD found the super on the first kiln landing. McCharles was a quiet man with a firm, square chin.

"What's on your mind, Morley? More demams on the catwalks?"

Bud looked away, but, encouraged by McCharles' quick smile, he expressed his opinion.

"These — accidents — sir," he said. "I still think someone is deliberately trying to slow down this plant's war production by frightening and injuring plant personnel."

"Sounds fantastic, son!" McCharles looked steadily at Bud. "Any new development to bolster your supposition?"

Bud was explaining about the ladder episode when bull-necked Karns, the kiln foreman, appeared beside them.

Karns' dark face scowled. He snorted disbelieve.

"You sure have an imagination, kid — thinkin' up all that screwy stuff." The foreman grinned knowingly at the super. "It's like I told you this morning, McCharles. The kiln-room crew's gettin' jittery since the kid here got scared and spread this cock-and-bull story about some maniac on the loose. The crew's nervous and careless. Careless men have accidents around moving machinery."

"Sounds logical," agreed the super. He studied Bud a moment. "Better soft-pedal this scare talk, Morley. It's not helping morale. We're trying to fill a rush order of sugar for the army. Panic certainly won't help production. See me if anything definite turns up. Otherwise, keep your lip buttoned."

THE super started inspecting the kiln port fires. Karns sneered at Morley.

"Listen, you smart kid — why don't you pull out of here and hunt another job? You might be the next one to get hurt."

Bud pondered over Karns' warning and wondered if he should stay around. He didn't want trouble with Karns or the person causing these accidents. An accident might happen to him along the dark catwalks some night. Or Karns could frame him in some way — drain a bearing and cause it to burn out, and then fire him for carelessness.

But with the army needing supplies, he knew he would stick as long as McCharles wanted him.

On his first round of oiling, Bud investigated the opposite side of the partition where he had seen the stick being withdrawn. There were fresh tracks in the dust on some boards opposite the hole, and wood splinters in the jagged hole itself.

A noise caused Bud to whirl about. Deep in the shadows a dim form was edging away. He saw a man's bulk duck behind a sugar boiler. Bud circled the boiler, but the man had slipped down a ladder and out a side door. No chance to catch anyone outside among the side-tracked molasses cars. Whoever was watching him certainly did not want to be seen.

Several times during the next few hours Bud felt he was being followed. He was not frightened, but in view of what seemed to be going on, it was disconcerting. His job was dangerous enough as it was.

ABOUT midnight he had to cross the dark roof of a building next to the higher kiln-room. The roof was covered with chimneys, which resembled tombstones in the murky night.

He took a few steps toward the pulley bearing, which needed oiling. Then, aware of movement near him and the crunch of footsteps, he froze.

Against the bright city lights, Bud saw the dark silhouette of a man. The figure crouched below the waist-high wall at the roof's edge.

Bud reached for the wrench in his hip pocket. He hesitated, wondering what to do. There were bearings across the roof that needed oiling. If he went for help the crew would laugh at him, as Karns had. He gripped the wrench and started slowly across the shadowy roof.

At the opposite edge he looked down. The huge piles of lime rock were like snowy peaks in the glare of headlights. The rock men working with the push-cars were like toys. At the far end of a high catwalk belt, pulp trickled into the massive pit. The sour smell of the pulp polluted the night air.

TOO late he heard the slithering noise behind him. A blow landed on the back of his neck. He staggered forward against the wall, hung like a sack, trying to brace his rubbery legs. He twisted about and saw the gloating face of the kiln foreman, Karns!

Bud swung the wrench, heard it thud against Karns' bulging shoulder. The foreman grunted

and struck back. The wrench flew from Bud's hand, clattered onto the gravel-topped roof.

Karns charged, forcing Bud's lighter weight backward. His left arm gripped the brick ledge as he struggled to brace his body against the momentum that could carry him off the roof.

Desperately he drove trip-hammer blows against Karns' body. He felt the foreman's breath hot on his face, heard the strangling sobs of his own breathing as he strained to break the big man's grip on his arm.

Bud felt himself being lifted and shoved over the wall. He grabbed Karns' throat and for one long moment hung over the ledge. He saw the lights gleaming on the car tracks below.

Bud tried to cry out, but no sound came from his dry lips. He was scared, but his grip on Karns' throat did not slacken. The foreman was strangling, his strength lessening. Bud twisted his own body, braced his legs and shoved Karns backward. Suddenly Karns collapsed. Bud let go of him, his own body exhausted.

HE HEARD voices, vaguely saw an approaching light. McCharles came up, heading a small party of men. A plant guard handcuffed Karns and yanked him to his feet when the foreman started to curse and thrash about.

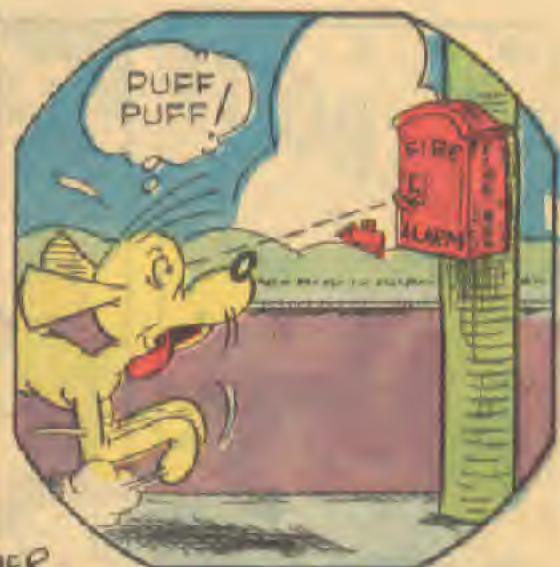
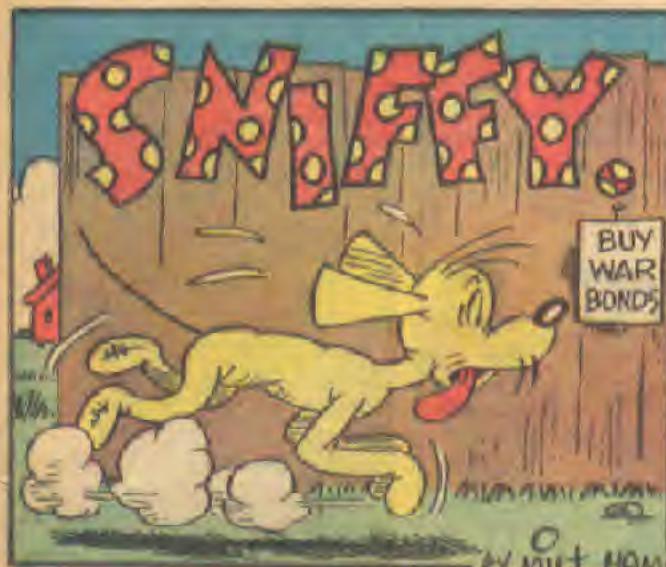
Later, McCharles called Bud to his office. "I've a proposition to make to you, Morley." He grinned. "But first about Karns. The F. B. I. checked up and found him in the pay of an enemy agent, who planned to organize others to sabotage American industry by fear and murder camouflaged as industrial accidents. Karns jumped the gun, tipping us off, and his co-workers are being rounded up all over the country."

Bud stared. "And I thought it was the work of some local crackpot," he said.

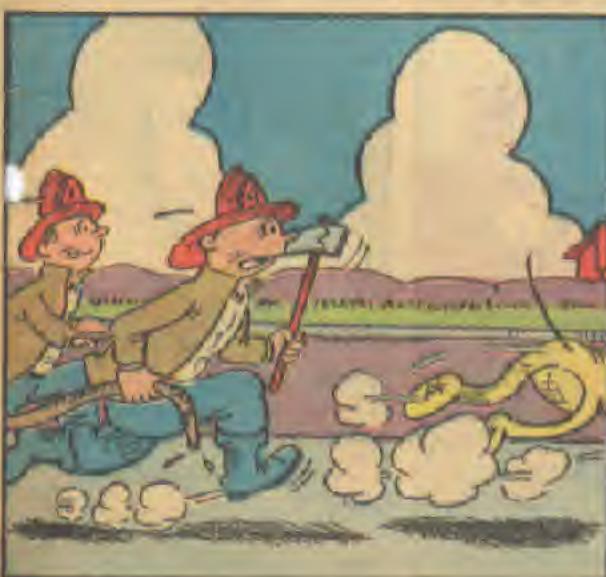
"You were partly right, Morley. Karns has been held several times in the past for observation of his mentality." McCharles appraised Bud's trim body. "Looks like the navy will get a fighter when they call you later on—and a good machinist, too. Already you've been of considerable service to your fellow workers and your country."

McCharles smiled. "Since Karns is leaving us, how would you like to boss the kiln crew, Morley? The job is yours if you want it, and it'll be open to you when you come back, if you have nothing better lined up."

Bud took McCharles' offered hand. "I'll take that job, McCharles. And thanks a lot."



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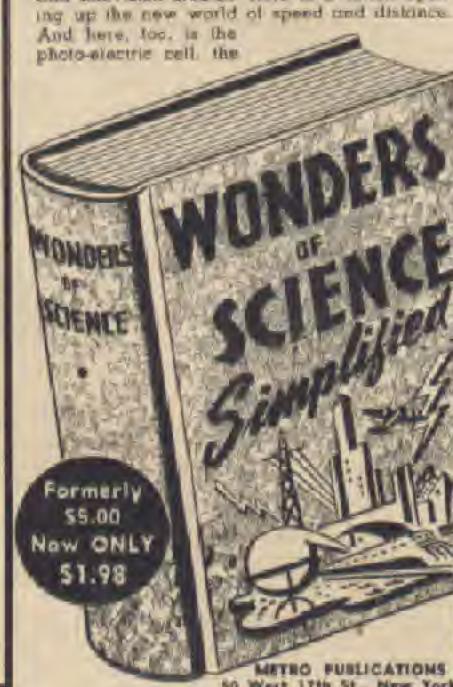
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